



The Insider

www.senate.michigan.gov/switalski

Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

April 17, 2009

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a location near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See the schedule below for details.

Mickey's Blog: Off With Their Scalps!

I hope everyone had a sage and wonderful Easter.

As I have for the last 20 years, I went to my sister Monica's house in Baltimore for a long weekend. It is a 500-mile drive through the mountains of Pennsylvania, which my son Liam and I did overnight, arriving to our destination at about 4 a.m. My wife Roma, who does not share our affection for all-night drives, flew out after an important meeting Thursday evening.

We did manage to see the Orioles play the Yankees at Camden Yards. We bought our tickets off a scalper outside the stadium, who proceeded to offer us his cell phone number in case we ever wanted tickets in the future. There is a certain outlaw allure to buying from a scalper. To my 16-year old son, the fact that we bought from a scalper was the highlight of his day.

The Scalping business has changed. I would put it in the general category of behaviors we previously thought of as illegal, and that we now increasingly tolerate. Gambling is an excellent example of such behavior. It used to be outlawed everywhere except Las Vegas, but now we have a plethora of casinos, and many states operate Lotteries.

I am currently in a dispute over advertising the Lottery in the state budget. Operators of the Lottery have asked for an increase in their advertising budget, which they argue will result in increased revenues to the state. All net proceeds, about \$700 million, go into the School Aid Fund.

As an aside, that is about 5 percent of the state's \$13 billion School Aid Budget. So the most frequently asked question about school funding, "Why do schools need more money? Where did all the Lottery money go?" is best understood by seeing that even with all the Lottery money going to the schools, it is only 5%, or a drop in the bucket.

A good sized drop, but a drop nevertheless.

But I digress.

My argument with Lottery advertising is this: I understand that people are going to gamble, and the state has decided to operate a clean game, away from organized crime, and will devote the proceeds to a worthwhile cause, education. I am on board. But do I have to also spend money to promote gambling? Are people not gambling enough? Should the state spend money to encourage them to gamble more?

It is one thing for the state to tolerate, and regulate, gambling. It is another matter to promote it. So I offered an amendment to cut the advertising budget last year by 10 percent. I lost that battle. I will probably be content if we just hold the line this year with no increase.

It appears to me that scalping is likewise becoming more tolerable to the public. The fact that the scalper was offering his cell phone number is exhibit one. If you have ever tried to buy Cubs or Yankee tickets on Stub Hub, you have seen exhibit two. Stub Hub is a great website for tickets, and teams used to fight it. Now they advertise it during the games. It is a secondary market for tickets. Like scalping.

Ticketmaster was recently sued by Bruce Springsteen concertgoers, who went on the Ticketmaster website as soon as the concert was announced, yet were quickly moved to a secondary site where tickets were marked up by 100% or more. Ticketmaster settled after being caught for this outrageous form of scalping.

Incidentally, the Orioles, who have suffered through 11 straight losing seasons, are much improved. But they nevertheless lost 11-2 to the Yankees on that day.

I cannot end without detailing the highlights of the trip. We had our 3rd annual McDonnell Family Reunion. My mother, Nancy Ann McDonnell, has a brother Larry McDonnell who lives in the D.C. area, and his family has settled there. Monica started organizing these reunions as a way for us Switalskis to see our aunt, uncles, and cousins on my mother's side.

The centerpiece of these get-togethers, besides a lot of exotic beer drinking, is two competitive events.

The Switalskis stretched their record to 3-0 with a convincing victory in the Switalski v. McDonnell Soccer Match. My 8-year old nephew Elliot scored 2 goals in the win.

That was only a warm up for the main event: Holy Saturday evening's Egg Coloring Contest. With all humility, I must tell you that for the 3rd year in a row, I was awarded 1st prize in the adult division for my rendition of an egg as a can of Budweiser Beer. It had a top and bottom of tin foil over cardboard, with a pop top glued on, and I embossed the top with "Anheuser-Busch." Using pen and ink, I painstakingly drew the label, contents, barcode and other details on the body of the egg.

If I may say so myself, it was brilliant.

The panel of judges agreed.

Perhaps you have seen my winner from last year, a dragon emerging from the egg, at the Smithsonian.

Or from two years ago, at the Museum of Modern Art, an egg as the earth, complete with continents.

The Budweiser egg can be seen at my home for a limited time only, before finding a permanent home at the Louvre, in Paris. I understand it will be given the place formerly reserved for the Mona Lisa.

Mickey's Ends and Notes

MACOMB SENIORS TO ENJOY FREE DAY AT DETROIT ZOO APRIL 29

Senior citizens living in Macomb County are invited to enjoy a special day at the Detroit Zoo on *Senior Day*, Wednesday, April 29, 2009, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Seniors, 62 and older, and their caregivers will receive free admission, parking and rides on the Tauber Family Railroad.

The day will feature live music, narrated tractor train tours and bingo. The day's activities will also include animal enrichment activities and zookeeper talks highlighting some of the Zoo's senior residents.

A Senior Resource Area will be available where seniors can speak with representatives from the following organizations: Birmingham Area Seniors Coordinator Council, Blue Care Network, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Health Choice Home Health Care, Home Instead Senior Care, HUG Center for Hearing, Medilodge, and Social Security Administration.

The Detroit Zoo is located at the intersection of Ten Mile Road and Woodward Avenue, just off I-696, in Royal Oak. For more information, call (248) 541-5717 or visit www.detroitzoo.org.

REMEMBER TO VOTE MAY 5

Don't forget to cast your ballot on Tuesday, May 5th for local school elections. Voters who need to have their absentee ballot mailed to them must apply no later than 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 2nd. Absentee ballots can be obtained in person anytime through 4 p.m. on Monday, May 4th at your local clerk's office.

To find out if there is an election in your community on May 5th, visit the Secretary of State's website at <http://www.michigan.gov/sos> or check with your county clerk's office. The Michigan Voter Information Center is another helpful resource (www.michigan.gov/vote). It helps you determine whether you're registered to vote and it will direct you to your polling location.

It is important to note that Michigan has a voter identification requirement and you will be asked to present photo ID at the polls, such as a Michigan driver's license or identification card. If you do not have an acceptable form of photo ID or did not bring it with you, you can still vote by signing a brief affidavit stating that you're not in possession of a photo ID. Your ballot will be included with all others and counted on Election Day.

GOVERNOR APPOINTS STERLING HEIGHTS RESIDENT TO ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

William D. Dechavez of Sterling Heights, the Michigan chairperson for the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, was appointed to the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission for a term expiring on November 30, 2011.

The Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, recently reorganized by Executive Order 2009-21, is charged with promoting awareness of the Asian and Pacific American community in the areas of economic development, social and cultural issues.

Coffee Hours

*In response to requests from constituents, I have added coffee hours in Roseville and during the daytime. Here are my next scheduled coffee hours. Please feel to stop on by or make an appointment by calling my office.

April 27 1:30-2:30 p.m. Senator Switalski's District Office (31513 Gratiot, Suite B) Roseville	June 29 1:30-2:30 p.m. Senator Switalski's District Office (31513 Gratiot, Suite B) Roseville
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Mickey's TV Insider Show

Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

Sterling Heights

Every Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Utica

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Clinton Township

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Roseville

Various Times-check local listings
(Comcast Channel 18/WOW Channel 10)

Contact My Office

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